Export/import of goods

*19. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of goods imported and exported alongwith the foreign exchange spent and earned thereon during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the steps taken by Government to produce and manufacture the goods being imported into the country; and

(c) if no action has been taken so far, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) According to the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, the value of India's imports were US$ 51413 million, US$ 60189 million and US$ 75209 million (Provisional) during 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04 respectively. During the same period the value of India's total exports were US$ 43827 million, US$ 52742 million and US$ 61845 million (Provisional).

(b) and (c) As part of the Industrial Policy and Economic Reforms Policy, many steps have been taken to revitalize the manufacturing sector to enable production of goods which can be manufactured in India, but are imported. Some of these measures are liberalization of industrial licensing policy leading to a substantial reduction in the number of items requiring compulsory licensing; simplified locational policy for setting up of new units; and Industrial Infrastructure Upgradation Scheme to help creation of quality infrastructure in industrial clusters/locations and enhance competitiveness of domestic industry through increased productivity.

Poverty in the country

*20. SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL: Will the Minister of URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether poverty in the country is on the decline as per the World Bank report;

(b) if so, the features of the report;

(c) the steps being considered further to eliminate poverty which is at present 28.6 per cent;

(d) whether Government's new economic programme would help to reduce poverty further; and

(e) if so, the concrete steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (e) The World Bank, in its Report titled "India: Sustaining Reform, Reducing Poverty", while reporting on the progress on social indicators for the period 1980-2000, have reported that the percentage of incidence of poverty in India has declined as follows:—

POVERTY INCIDENCE (PERCENTAGE)

1980s	1990s	2000s
44.5%	36.0%	26.1%

The Report, *inter-alia*, deals with assessing development outcomes, progress on social indicators, macro-economic trends over the past two decades, fiscal policy, reforms in power distribution, delivery of public services, improving the investment climate for industry and services, agriculture and rural development and development prospects and risks.

Insofar as the Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation is concerned, it has been implementing through the State/Union Territory Governments, a Centrally Sponsored Urban Poverty Alleviation Programme named Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), on All-India basis, with effect from 1.12.1997 with a view to providing gainful employment to the urban unemployed or under-employed poor through firstly, the encouraging the setting up of self-employment ventures by those, who have studied upto 9th Standard and secondly, by providing wage employment by utilizing their labour for construction of socially and economically useful public assets. The programme is meant to alleviate the urban poverty and the same has been continued in the 10th Five Year Plan (2002-07). In addition, other programmes such as Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY), National Slum Development Programme (NSDP),

housing for economically weaker sections are being vigorously implemented with a view to ameliorate the conditions of the urban poor.

Chinese investment in infrastructure sector

1. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether China has called for expanding bilateral ties with India in the infrastructure sector, keeping in view a spurt in East Asian countries' construction industry after its accession to the World Trade Organization;

(b) if so, whether China International Construction Association (CHINCA) Vice-Chairman has pointed out that Chinese companies were keen to explore projects with Indian companies on BOT basis in the areas including railways, housing, hospitals and bridges;

(c) if so, whether Government have accepted the Chinese proposal;

(d) if so, whether any agreement has been reached; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (e) Vice-Chairman, China International Construction Association (CHINCA) had recently during an interaction with Indian businessmen expressed the desire of Chinese companies to jointly explore projects on BOT basis in areas like railways, housing, hospitals, bridges, etc.

The Chinese companies have been participating in the process of award of works in the infrastructure sector.

Financial assistance to coffee growers

2. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have extended a special financial assistance to the coffee growers to tide over the economic crisis in the sector during 2003-04;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the extent of subsidy given to the coffee growers during 2003-04;